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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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P.O. BOX 56, 19 MOORE STREET
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October 23, 2017

Re: Rodent burrows at Joey's Park

Dear Winn Brook Resident:

The Department of Public Works (DPW) and Health Department are working together to control the rodent population at Joey's Park. *Assurance Pest Solutions*, a professional pest control operator, will treat the rodent burrows with *Rat-Out Gel*, a deterrent substance that consists of active ingredients such as garlic oil and white pepper, and trap the nuisance wildlife in baiting stations located throughout the park. This section of the park will be regularly monitored and treated by the professional pest control operator over the next 3-4 weeks and it will remain closed until the problem is safely resolved.

Although our Departments do not have evidence that rats are on your property, we feel it is necessary to bring this matter to your attention. Please find on the back of this letter educational material on how to keep your property clean and less likely to experience a rodent infestation.

Please read through this flyer and check your property for any evidence of rodent burrows, harborage, or conditions that may attract rats. If there is a rat harborage problem on your property please take care of the situation by contracting with a professional pest control service.

Please feel free to contact DPW at (617) 993-2680 or the Health Department (617) 993-2720 with any questions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jay Marcotte, MPA
Director of Public Works
Belmont Department of Public Works

Wesley Chin, MPH
Director of Health
Belmont Health Department

(Please turn over)





Rats in Belmont

What you need to know about rats and your home Town of Belmont Health Department



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Be on the lookout!

Rats are and have been a part of the Massachusetts ecosystem since the area was originally settled in the early 17th century. They are a "cosmopolitan" species and are commonly found in most urban areas due to readily available food sources such as household garbage.

The Belmont Health Department staff is receiving a dramatic increase in rat complaints and sightings from residents of Belmont. Many of these reports have been confirmed. All of the rat harborage areas confirmed by Health Department staff have been on private property. Additionally, public property such as parks, school yards, and sewers are being monitored by DPW and Health Department staff.



Rats as a pest

- Rats are known carriers of disease.
- They can contaminate food with their urine and feces.
- Their burrows can cause aesthetic and potential structural damage to your home.



Rat burrow

- Rats' teeth grow continuously during their lives and they chew things to keep them short. They will even chew on electrical wires, which can be costly as well as dangerous.



What should I look for on my property?

- **Rat burrows:** These are holes in the ground 2-4 inches in diameter where rats may be living. Look for burrows under fences, buildings, homes and cement slabs surrounding structures. You can test whether the burrow is active by filling in the hole with dirt and checking to see if it is cleared quickly.
- **Rat tracks:** In the winter, you may be able to spot rodent tracks leading to or from a burrow.
- **Droppings**
- **Smudge marks** (body oils) on walls.
- **Sounds of movement** in walls and attics.
- **Family pets staring intently** at a blank wall.



What can I do to prevent them from coming to my property?

- **Pick up pet feces:** Rats eat dog and cat feces so be sure to pick up after your animals.
- **Bird seed:** Keep bird seed under control and in the feeder as much as possible. Rats are drawn to bird seed on the ground.
- **Tree fruit:** Pick up any fallen tree fruit.
- **Trash:** Rats will climb into open cans and root through trash on the ground. Tie up your trash bags and store them in covered containers until they can be disposed of properly.



- **Grills:** Keep grills and grilling areas clean and clear of food waste.
- **Compost piles:** Compost piles that are not properly contained provide food to rats. Make sure your compost is maintained and covered.
- **Yard waste and building material:** Make sure your yard is maintained and that yard waste is properly disposed of in yard bags. Stack building materials, lumber and firewood at least 18 inches above the ground.



- **Cover openings:** Don't give rats a place to live. Cover openings that are greater than 1/2 inch in diameter with concrete, sheet metal or wire mesh.
- **Screen basement windows:** Cover windows at or near ground level with wire mesh.
- **Cover basement drains:** Cover accessible drains in your basement with wire mesh or a drain cover.



Be sure garbage cans are tightly sealed

Rats are everybody's problem. We all need to do our part to keep them out!

If you think you have rats on your property, please contact a licensed professional pest control company to assist you.



Additionally, if you have seen a rat on your property or in your neighborhood, please contact the Belmont Health Department to report it.

QUESTIONS

Please contact the Belmont Health Department for more information or if you have any questions or concerns.

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